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FROM THE COEUR D'ALENE PRESS

**Candidate implies conflict of interest**

Posted: Tuesday, Sep 02, 2008 - 11:06:46 pm PDT

Richard Phenneger seeks NIC Board of Trustees seat held by Judy Meyer

COEUR d'ALENE -- A Coeur d'Alene businessman filed a petition of candidacy Tuesday for a seat on North Idaho College's Board of Trustees citing what he believes to be a conflict of interest regarding the development of an education corridor as the motivation for his decision to run.

Richard Phenneger is seeking election to the board seat now held by trustee Judy Meyer who announced her candidacy for re-election last week.

The conflict of interest alleged by Phenneger involves Meyer's husband, Steve, and Ed Morse, the owner of the real estate appraisal firm that recently completed a \$13.25 million market valuation of the Stimson Lumber Company's DeArmond Mill site, a 17-acre parcel NIC hopes to purchase for \$10 million using taxpayer dollars.

Phenneger pointed out that Steve Meyer and Morse are listed as owners of Ironwood Office Park, a limited liability company.

"In my 28 years of dealing with and analyzing corporations and business entities encompassing trusts and trustees, this is one of the most egregious conflicts of interest and violation of ethics and integrity that I have ever witnessed," Phenneger said. "A trustee should never allow a conflict of interest as serious as this to occur."

While he is not opposed to the development of an education corridor, Phenneger said he is opposed to the process he sees taking place in Coeur d'Alene.

"The real reason I'm running is because it's got to be cleaned up or it's going to taint NIC for a very long time," Phenneger said. "What's legal isn't necessarily right."

Ed Morse said he owns a "fair amount" of real estate and confirmed that some of his holdings "are in an LLC and include some interest that Steve Meyer has."

Morse said he does not see any potential for conflict in that.

Neither does Judy Meyer.

"Obviously, we don't believe so," Meyer said. "Having served on other boards, anytime you think there might be a conflict, you recuse yourself."

She said there are many people in town she and her husband have done business with over the years.

She said Morse was chosen by NIC's board to complete the appraisal because "he's one of the finest appraisers around."

"What conflict of interest would there be? To me, conflict of interest means there is some benefit," Meyer said.

Meyer said Morse and her husband own a building together on Northwest Boulevard near the Riverstone intersection, a purchase they made 20 years ago.

There is no conflict of interest as far as board chair Rolly Williams is concerned either.

"Ed Morse is a very reputable person. He's a professional appraiser who has done work for many people in this area," Williams said.

The college trustee election, a non-partisan race, will take place during Idaho's general election Nov. 4.

The filing deadline to declare candidacy for one of two open positions, both four-year terms, on the NIC board ended at 5 p.m. Tuesday.

The other seat opening is now held by Mic Armon who has filed his declaration of candidacy.

One other person, Tyler Smith, has filed a petition to run for Meyer's seat.

Armon will run unopposed.

### **West Ridge offers fresh start**

Students give new Post Falls school thumbs up

POST FALLS -- Students passed a test on opening day of new West Ridge Elementary on Tuesday.

Turns out Post Falls' fifth elementary school also passed the students' test.

"I really think that this is a great school," fourth-grader Justin Hargrave said. "We have a bunch of good teachers and students. I like how the building is put together and how the gym is hooked up to it."

During an assembly, Principal Mandy Surratt gave about 400 students permission to talk on the condition that they stop when she raised her hand, signaling an adult is about to speak.

The kids easily passed their first test of the school year, then learned about RICH (respect, impulse control, caring, honesty) behavior that they should strive for.

"If you do that, things will go really well," Surratt told the students.

The \$7.1 million school, which is laid out on 8 acres similar to Prairie View, has the feel of being in the country. It's surrounded by open space and accessed by just one paved road. Only one bike was parked in the rack in front of the school on Tuesday.

But a quick glance beyond the fields reveals the Montrose and Prairie Meadows subdivisions and the Kimball Office plant are close by. Although development around the school is imminent, there will be a 3.8-acre city park adjacent to the school property.

The school was built to reduce crowding at Seltice, Mullan Trail and Prairie View. Space already appears to be a premium. One class sat on the gym floor during the assembly due to the bleachers being full.

"We're already close to the capacity (of 500)," Surratt said.

The district hired another teacher for the school last week in anticipation of the student load.

Students and staff said they are excited about starting a new school year in a new building.

"I like everything -- the teachers, the classrooms and the gym," fourth-grader Celina VanHynning said.

Student Logan Geary said he liked having options for lunch.

"So far I like the choices," he said.

At recess, third-grader Victor Gomez tried out the basketball court with two of his buds. Although he said he'll miss his teacher at Seltice, he's also looking forward to a fresh start.

"It's a good playground, and the teachers and principal are nice," he said.

Third-grade teacher Debbie Garnett said West Ridge has provided her with a "unique opportunity."

"I've taught for 30 years and this is my first time at a new school," said Garnett, who formerly taught at Mullan Trail. "You couldn't ask for a nicer facility, and I was glad to follow Mandy."

Students will choose in October between the Mustangs, Cougars and Wolves as their school mascot.

The new school was funded through the sale of bonds approved by district voters last year

FROM THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

**No education news stories posted online today.**

FROM THE MOSCOW PULLMAN DAILY NEWS (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

**Area schools improve math scores**

Some rural districts still struggling to meet state averages

By Halley Griffin, Daily News staff writer

Posted on: Tuesday, September 02, 2008

Most Latah County schools saw improvement in the math portion of the Idaho Standards Achievement Test between the 2006-07 and 2007-08 school years.

Individual schools' ISAT results were released to the public today, though superintendents already had received their districts' results.

All schools in the Moscow School District improved their math scores from the 2006-07 school year to the 2007-08 school year. Although McDonald, Russell and West Park elementary schools saw a slight dip in reading scores, all Moscow schools scored higher than state averages in both reading and math.

Russell Elementary School and Moscow Junior High School both failed to meet Adequate Yearly Progress targets. Six area schools did not meet their AYP goals at only two districts - the Whitepine Joint School District and Kendrick Joint School District - failed to make AYP as mandated by the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

Moscow Junior High School Principal Dale Kleinert said teachers use the previous year's test scores to target areas where individual students need improvements.

He said the ability to see the scores broken down by subject and by student helps focus on deficiencies.

"We think that in all areas we really had a lot of growth and we're celebrating that growth," Kleinert said.

Moscow Junior High School did fail to make AYP in the students with disabilities category. Kleinert said teachers and administrators have developed new programming to help students with disabilities.

"Meeting that goal is difficult because of the very nature of the disability," he said.

Some rural districts struggled to match statewide averages in reading and math. Both Troy Elementary School and Troy Junior-Senior High School scored below state averages in math, though the junior-senior high school scored well above the state average in reading, improving its year-to-year score by more than 6 percent.

Troy Junior-Senior High School saw an overall jump in math scores of more than 10 percent, with 78.82 percent of students scoring at a proficient level. Still, it finished below the state average of 80.85 percent.

In the Whitepine Joint School District, Deary School scored below the state average in reading, but above the state average in math. Scores in both categories fell from the previous year. Bovill Elementary School improved scores in reading and math from the previous year, and scored above state averages on both portions of the test.

The Idaho Distance Education Academy scored below state and district averages in both reading and math, but improved its math scores from the previous year.

The Whitepine Joint School District failed to meet AYP goals in reading and math for students with disabilities.

In the Kendrick Joint School District, both Juliaetta Elementary School and Kendrick Junior-Senior High School fell short of state averages in reading. The junior-senior high school actually improved on its scores from the previous year in both math and reading, while Juliaetta Elementary School's reading and math scores fell slightly from 2006-07.

Kendrick Junior-Senior High School Principal Jeff Cirka said he's pleased with the year-to-year improvement.

"I think that our scores are very indicative of the student population that we have," he said.

Cirka said rural schools have a hard time because just one or two students can skew their numbers, and that the district will continue to work on improving scores.

Potlatch Junior/Senior High School improved its math and reading scores from 2006-07 to 2007-08, but failed to meet AYP targets.

Statewide averages improved in reading and math, though the state did not meet its overall AYP targets. From 2006-07 to 2007-08, state reading scores climbed from 80.88 percent proficient to 84.57 percent proficient. In math, statewide averages increased from 77.04 percent proficient to 80.85 percent proficient.

The state did not make AYP because of inadequate performances in the limited English proficiency category in both math and reading, and in the students with disabilities category for math and reading.

## **Not all think UI should open law school in Boise**

By Jessie L. Bonner, Associated Press

Posted on: Tuesday, September 02, 2008

BOISE - Some of the people who govern higher education in Idaho aren't sure about a plan to open a law school branch in the state capital, and they've also posed this question: Does Idaho really need more lawyers?

They also wonder if the money could be better spent on other needs, such as fixing a statewide shortage of nurses.

The University of Idaho now operates the state's only law school at its campus in Moscow.

Don Burnett, dean of the University of Idaho College of Law, went before the Idaho State Board of Education in August and pushed hard to open a branch campus in Boise, where future lawyers could study in a larger city near the Idaho Supreme Court.

The Moscow campus is ideal for some students, Burnett said, but the rural setting is not for everyone.

"It's a small town," Burnett said. "We have locational disadvantages and we want to solve them."

The board didn't say no to the idea, but two members, both lawyers, made it clear that they are far from saying yes.

Board member Blake Hall said he would fully support improving legal education in Idaho but doesn't understand why that can't be done at Moscow. Opening a law school branch in Boise would take about eight years and cost an extra \$6 million a year to operate.

"I'm concerned about taking limited resources and dividing them between two institutions," said Hall, an Idaho Falls lawyer.

Even after the board proposed, and later approved, a compromise to allow the university to open classes in 2010 for third-year law students in Boise, both Hall and board member Paul Agidius still opposed the measure.

"I have been lobbied more heavily on this issue than any other in the past eight years," said Agidius, a Moscow lawyer.

The idea of a Boise law school has been batted around for decades.

Sen. Denton Darrington, R-Declo, says the UI law school needs to expand into Boise before another school does. He agrees with university officials who argue a Boise branch would increase law school enrollment and boost the school's reputation.

But Sen. Gary Schroeder, R-Moscow, says he'll make sure the university doesn't get "one dime" to move any part of the law school to a city 300 miles south of the Moscow campus, noting that the Idaho Constitution requires that legal education be based at the University of Idaho.

As university officials pleaded their case to the board, they emphasized that timing is crucial. Concordia University, a private Lutheran university in Oregon, has also set its sites on Boise, announcing plans to open a law school here.

Steven Daley-Laursen, UI interim president, told the board that the proposal was a "top priority" and called the plan "our last clear chance before a private venture fills the void."

"It's a strategic move," he said, "It's not an accident, it's not a fallback."

But the university had a tough act to follow as they brought their proposal to the board Aug. 21. Earlier that day, the board heard from Dr. Ted Epperly, director of the Family Medicine Residency of Idaho.

The nonprofit group has helped more than 220 medical students complete residencies in Idaho since 1974. Epperly urged the board to help expand medical education in Idaho, pointing out the statewide shortage of not just nurses, but family doctors.

Idaho ranks 47th in the nation in the ratio of primary care doctors to residents, Epperly said. The state has about 400 family doctors and a population of about 1.5 million, which means there's one family doctor for every 3,750 people.

"Not only do we face a critical nursing shortage, we face a critical shortage of family doctors," Epperly told The Associated Press.

Last year, the Legislature tried to help alleviate nursing shortages by putting money toward two buildings, including a \$16 million facility at Lewis-Clark State College.

As Hall flipped through page after page of the hefty University of Idaho proposal to expand legal education in Idaho - a plan that would allow the law school to hold about 500 students, compared to the 300 it has now - he said he couldn't find justification for a law school branch in Boise.

"I just couldn't find any empirical evidence that there's not enough attorneys in the country," Hall said.

## **OUR VIEW: Residency rule worth a try in other entities (editorial)**

By Murf Raquet, for the editorial board

Posted on: Tuesday, September 02, 2008



The Moscow School Board of Trustees made the right decision last Tuesday.

The board unanimously approved a requirement recommended by Superintendent Candis Donicht that all administrators live within the district.

The thought process is that living within the district will make administrators more accessible and accountable to their employers - the taxpayers.

"It feels reasonable for me to ask for administrators to live in the community where they work," board member Julia McIlroy said.

The rule applies to 10 positions in the district. All of the affected employees presently live in the district.

The rule is a simple one and will be in force when one of those positions becomes vacant.

We hope other entities follow with similar residency requirements.

For instance, most of the department heads at the city of Moscow don't live in the city. These employees are administrators who determine their departmental budgets and are an integral part of the city budget process as well.

Moscow property owners shoulder a hefty proportion of the taxes that fund the budget.

It would be nice if those administrators who create the budgets also would have to contribute as residents. That's not the case for those who live outside the city limits, including Washington state.

It's not realistic to advocate those out-of-town administrators pull up stakes and move to Moscow.

We would like to see the city make it a requirement that new administrators live in the city.

It would be nice to see how they would respond to tax increases if they have to pay them, too. Maybe a residency requirement would stimulate serious thought about budgets before they are voted on by the City Council.

FROM THE LEWISTON TRIBUNE (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

**No education news stories posted online today.**

## FROM THE IDAHO-PRESS TRIBUNE, NAMPA

### **Dozen vie for CWI board**

EDUCATION: Canyon County could end up without representation because all positions are at-large

By Mike Butts  
mbutts@idahopress.com

NAMPA — Four of the 12 candidates running for the College of Western Idaho's first elected board live in Canyon County. But depending on the outcome of the election, the board could end up without any Canyon County members.

All five board seats are at-large. One contested seat has no candidates from Canyon County and the other two contested seats both have candidates from Ada County.

Nampa businessman Jerry Hess, the board chairman and one of the college's original board members appointed last year, said he had not thought of the idea of having board seats designated for particular areas.

"(This) is the first time the question's been posed," Hess said.

Joining Nampa businesswoman M.C. Niland running for seats on the board are Nampa research and development analyst Tammy Ray, Nampa retired sociology professor Martin Scheffer and Caldwell attorney Jim Rice. State officials appointed Niland to the college's inaugural board last year.

State Sen. Stan Bastian, R-Eagle, running for Seat 1, formerly served as a high school vice principal and professional-technical coordinator for the Nampa School District.

The deadline for announcing candidacy for the five-member board was Tuesday. The election will be Nov. 4 as part of the general election.

CWI will begin offering classes at its Nampa campus in January.

Scheffer, 70, taught at Boise State University when it was a junior college in the 1960s and stayed at Boise State until 1997. Rice has made two unsuccessful runs for county commissioner as a Republican.

Ray has a master's degree in education and worked with the Idaho Department of Education for six years.

### **Who's running**

Here are the candidates for the College of Western Idaho board. n

#### **Seat 1:**

Stan Bastian, Eagle; Daniel Dunham, Boise; Bruce Wong, Boise; Stephen Woychick, Boise n

#### **Seat 2:**

Gordon Browning, Meridian; Tammy Ray, Nampa; Jim Rice, Caldwell; Martin Scheffer, Nampa  
n

Seat 3:

M.C. Niland, Nampa; Charles Story, Boise n

Seat 4:

Mark Dunham, Boise n

Seat 5:

Guy Hurlbutt, Boise

Hess announced he would not seek election to the board. So did original board member Hatch Barrett of Boise.

Mark Dunham and Guy Hurlbutt, both of Boise, are two board members who are seeking election to the board. They will run unopposed.

### **Public schools chief requests \$1.5 billion**

BOISE (AP) — The state Department of Education plans to ask Idaho lawmakers in January for \$1.5 billion to operate and enhance public schools in 2009 and 2010.

Public schools superintendent Tom Luna released his yearly budget proposal on Tuesday.

The \$1.5 billion Luna will request in 2009 is about 5 percent more than the \$1.46 billion he requested in January 2008.

### **FROM THE IDAHO STATESMAN**

#### **Eagle High ordered to make room for electives**

Officials may have to make changes to the 6-period day that many teachers and parents prefer to block scheduling.

Eagle High School

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

What other schools do

Meridian District's other high schools have two types of schedules:

Mountain View and Meridian high schools

A/B Block: Classes meet for 90 minutes every other day.

Total number of classes in a semester: 8

Total credits after four years: 64

Rocky Mountain and Centennial high schools

Hybrid: Three one-hour classes meet daily, and two 90-minute classes meet on alternate days.

Total classes in a semester: 7

Total credits after four years: 56

BY BILL ROBERTS - broberts@idahostatesman.com

Edition Date: 09/03/08

Eagle High School must give its 1,650 students more chances to take electives by next school year, Meridian School District's superintendent says.

The school is the only one of the district's five high schools to stick with a daily class schedule that cuts sharply into the number of electives students can take as they are being required to pass more math and science classes to graduate.

The school's six periods of daily classes means 46 of 48 credits are filled by required subjects, leaving space for just two elective classes over four years.

Other schools have broken their traditional schedules in ways that let students take more courses throughout high school.

"The board gave (Eagle High) another year to develop a plan to provide students with expanded opportunities," said Superintendent Linda Clark. "I have no doubt that they will come up with something that will meet the needs."

Starting with this year's sophomore class, Meridian district is requiring four years of math and three years of science. That is up from two years of math and two years of science, and it is one more year of math than the state's new graduation requirements mandate.

About 80 percent of Eagle High students already are meeting the district's math and science requirement because they are using their existing electives to prepare for college.

In the district's other high schools, which have adapted schedules to allow more electives, students earn between 56 and 64 credits over four years. Classes in these schools can meet every other day to make room for more courses.

Eagle's schedule now forces kids who opt for more than a handful of nonrequired electives to take classes before school opens, or to take correspondence classes or summer courses to meet graduation requirements. Correspondence courses can cost up to \$200. Summer classes can run \$80.

"I am beginning to hear from parents of kids who have to supplement," said Anne Ritter, a school board trustee from the Eagle area. They want to know why other high schools offer more classes, she said.

Tiffany Atkinson, the parent of an Eagle High sophomore, supported the six-period day when her daughter started high school last year - in part because classes met every day.

"Things like math I think they need ... every day," she said.

But the new graduation requirements are forcing her to rethink her daughter's schedule.

"I feel like with the increases, we are going to have to make some changes. I would really like (her) to take an art course," she said. "There is no room."

Atkinson's daughter, however, is happy with the schedule as it is. In some of the other schedules, "you won't get as much class time," she said. "I think we get more done with a six-period day."

Many Eagle High parents and faculty are steadfast supporters of the six-period day. Even as schools like Centennial and the new Rocky Mountain High School planned for this year's schedules to allow more electives, Eagle has remained a believer in the way it has provided education since it opened its doors in 1995.

Teachers like seeing kids every day, and many are reluctant to tinker with the schedule that has produced strong academic achievement, said Tanya Elmer, an Eagle High chemistry teacher.

District officials and board members don't want to impose a system on Eagle High. "I think we need to do it from the bottom up," Ritter said.

Principal Terry Beck expects to bring faculty and parents into discussions about class scheduling in the near future. If Eagle is to change its classes next fall, a decision needs to be made by the first of the year, he said.

If change has to come, Elmer wants to make sure it is well thought out and won't erode gains the school has made. Collecting data on what courses students take, for example, is important to helping guide those changes so "we have enough data to know how to tweak it," she said.

## **Boise School Board trustees re-elected**

In a small field of three candidates, Orndorff and Gregory retain their seats as district trustees.

BY ANNE WALLACE ALLEN - aallen@idahostatesman.com

Edition Date: 09/03/08

School Board members Janet Orndorff and Nancy Gregory were re-elected to their trustee seats Tuesday night.

Only 1,174, or 1.19 percent, of Boise School District's 98,517 registered voters turned out Tuesday for the election, said district spokesman Dan Hollar. In the last School Board election, in 2006, more than 4,000 voters came out. But at that time, there were five candidates for two open seats.

This year, there were only three candidates for two at-large seats held by Orndorff and Gregory. Orndorff got the most votes, with 975; Gregory was next with 901. Challenger Jeff Almeida came in third with just 362 votes.

"I had no idea which way it was going to go," said Orndorff, 63, soon after the results were tallied. "A lot of people I've touched over the years, both on the board and just in community service, and people that have known me, I think came out and voted for me."

Gregory, 52, said she plans to focus on making sure the district's multi-year facilities master plan is carried out over her next six-year term.

"I would like to say at the end of six more years that we are on track and making the appropriate progress on that facilities plan," Gregory said. "We should be in six years well into our next strategic plan, and hopefully just keeping the focus of the district on student achievement."

Almeida, who has a daughter in second grade at Shadow Hills Elementary School in West Boise, said he plans to stay involved.

"I'm really more of a behind-the-scenes guy," he said.

## **Free and reduced-price meal applications expected to rise in Boise schools**

ELSEWHERE

[Click here for more local news](#)

Anne Wallace Allen - aallen@idahostatesman.com  
Edition Date: 09/02/08

Applications for free and reduced-price school meals are expected to increase in Boise this year as rising prices and a slowing economy put extra burdens on families.

“I would expect it just to due to the economy and the cost of food and gas and all the rest of it,” said Peggy Moore supervisor of the Boise School District's food and nutrition services. “Our expenses have gone up significantly, therefore people have less expendable money.”

School meal prices stayed stable this year in Boise. But they will probably go up next year for the first time in four years, said Moore.

Moore said increases in food prices drove up the district's food expenditures by about \$180,000 more than projected last year.

“We're just absorbing it by trying to minimize staff overtime and in other ways,” Moore said. “We're being just as efficient as we can.”

The district has an annual food budget of about \$3 million and serves about 21,000 meals each day.

### **School Board OKs emergency levy to handle enrollment increase**

- STATESMAN STAFF  
Edition Date: 09/03/08

Enrollment in Kuna schools increased by 203 students, driving the School Board to approve an emergency levy of \$807,364, the maximum amount allowed under state law.

School districts in Idaho can pass an emergency levy without voter approval based on enrollment figures once school starts.

Kuna schools opened with 4,711 students last week, a 4.5 percent increase over last year.

### **Public schools chief to request \$1.5 billion**

The Associated Press  
Edition Date: 09/02/08

BOISE, Idaho — The state Department of Education plans to ask Idaho lawmakers in January for \$1.5 billion to operate and enhance public schools in 2009 and 2010.

Public schools superintendent Tom Luna released his yearly budget proposal on Tuesday.

The \$1.5 billion Luna will request in 2009 is about 5 percent more than the \$1.46 billion he requested in January 2008.

Luna calls his request "responsible" and says that he recognizes the state is operating on a tight budget. Like last year, Luna will ask for more than \$5 million to pay for classroom supplies.

Luna has also earmarked \$27 million in his budget for teacher raises and a pay-for-performance plan that is similar to a proposal that died in the Legislature earlier this year.

Idaho lawmakers voted to kill Luna's previous plan for merit-based pay increases in February, choosing instead to approve \$23.8 million in teacher raises and a plan to boost the minimum Idaho teacher salary by 3 percent.

#### **Ada, Canyon voters will pick 5 community college trustees Nov. 4**

The 12 candidates are running for either 2-year or 4-year terms on the board.

#### **ELSEWHERE**

College of Western Idaho  
BY BILL ROBERTS - broberts@idahostatesman.com  
Edition Date: 09/03/08

Twelve candidates are running for five trustee seats at the College of Western Idaho.

Two incumbents are unopposed. But eight candidates are vying for two open seats created when Jerry Hess, trustee president, and Hatch Barrett, a Boise truck dealership owner, decided not to run for the college board's first election.

A former state lawmaker, Stan Bastian, is among the challengers.

One incumbent, M.C. Niland, will face an opponent.

One candidate, Jesse Holmes of Boise, withdrew his name last week after filing to run.

The election is Nov. 4. Ada and Canyon county residents are eligible to vote. Seats 1 and 2 are for two-year terms. Seats three through five are four year terms. Trustees are elected at large.



College of Western Idaho was approved by voters in May 2007.

It is expected to start academic classes in January and professional technical classes in September 2009.

Here are the candidates:

SEAT 1

Daniel Dunham, Boise

Bruce Wong, Boise

Stan Bastian, Eagle

Stephen Woychick, Boise

SEAT 2

Gordon Browning, Meridian

Martin Scheffer, Nampa

Tammy W. Ray, Nampa

Jim Rice, Caldwell

SEAT 3

M.C. Niland, incumbent, Nampa

Charles Story, Boise

SEAT 4

Mark Dunham, incumbent, Boise

Guy Hurlbutt, incumbent, Boise

Bill Roberts: 377-6408

## FROM THE TWIN FALLS TIMES-NEWS

### **Luna budget seeks 5.4 percent increase**

Public school budget would be \$1.5 billion

By Ben Botkin

Times-News writer

Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna is seeking nearly \$1.5 billion for schools in fiscal year 2010, an increase of 5.4 percent.

About 40 percent of the additional funding is aimed at covering the growth of Idaho's student population, according to a press release from the State Department of Education.

In a statement on Tuesday, Luna said he recognizes that it will be a tight budget year and describes his request as "prudent and responsible."

The proposed budget includes the following details:

- \$5.7 million for classroom supplies, a 6.2 percent increase in funding for classrooms supplies and materials to accommodate the growth of teachers. The increase will also provide \$350 to each school library for supplies.
- \$5.3 million for the Idaho Math Initiative, which is a \$1.3 million increase. The increase will cover professional development for teachers and administrators, two math specialists, and intervention tools for high school students.
- \$3.5 million for a dual credit program so high school students can take up to six college-level credits each year as juniors and seniors.
- \$2 million for gifted and talented programs, a \$1 million increase. The requested money would help teachers earn a gifted and talented endorsement, and create regional centers for gifted and talented students with training and mentoring.
- A 3.5 percent increase in teacher pay. One third of the increase would hike up base pay and raise the minimum salaries. The other two-thirds would fund a pay-for-performance plan for teachers.

Sherri Wood, president of the Idaho Education Association, said her organization has requested a meeting with Luna to talk about the budget.

She said she hopes that any pay-for-performance system would be open to all teachers and not be given based on one single test for teachers. Wood also said she is concerned that the cost of living is more than the proposed salary increase.

Gaylen Smyer, superintendent of Cassia County School District, said he is pleased that that additional money for school supplies is included in the budget. He said he has not had a chance to see the full budget proposal and doesn't know yet what the full impact will be for his district.

Mel Wiseman, superintendent of Shoshone School District, said he likes seeing proposed increases for the Idaho Math Initiative, professional development and mentoring.

"Those are high-dollar items," he said.

### **CSI Falls Avenue entrance delayed again**

By Ben Botkin

Times-News writer

Paving work at the Falls Avenue entrance into the College of Southern Idaho has been delayed yet again.

Originally scheduled to start Tuesday, the paving likely will not start until at least today or Thursday, officials said.

The contractor held off on the paving work because of the temperature requirements for asphalt, said Nathan Jerke, a spokesman for Idaho Transportation Department District 4. To properly set, asphalt's temperature cannot drop lower than 20 degrees from the time it's in trucks to when it's poured, he said.

"They were a little leery that they would be cutting that close," Jerke said. "They wanted to wait a couple days."

Because \$750,000 of federal highway funding is paying for the project, ITD is administering the project, and the contractor is Knife River Inc. of Boise.

When complete, the Falls Avenue project will merge two separate entrance and exit lanes into a new entrance. The intersection will have traffic signals guiding three exiting lanes and two incoming lanes.

Until the project is finished, motorists will need to exit CSI using the Washington Street or North College Road entryways.

One lane is open for incoming traffic at the Falls Avenue entrance, but no vehicles can exit from there.

The goal for finishing the project is Sept. 12.

The college has received little feedback from people complaining about the situation, said Doug Maughan, college spokesman.

"We thought that we were going to have a lot of complaints but there has been surprisingly little," he said. "I think students and college employees have been dealing with the mess the best they can. We haven't heard a great deal of grumbling."

### **Public schools chief to request \$1.5 billion**

BOISE, Idaho - The state Department of Education plans to ask Idaho lawmakers in January for \$1.5 billion to operate and enhance public schools in 2009 and 2010.

Public schools superintendent Tom Luna released his yearly budget proposal on Tuesday.

The \$1.5 billion Luna will request in 2009 is about 5 percent more than the \$1.46 billion he requested in January 2008.

Luna calls his request "responsible" and says that he recognizes the state is operating on a tight budget. Like last year, Luna will ask for more than \$5 million to pay for classroom supplies.

Luna has also earmarked \$27 million in his budget for teacher raises and a pay-for-performance plan that is similar to a proposal that died in the Legislature earlier this year.

Idaho lawmakers voted to kill Luna's previous plan for merit-based pay increases in February, choosing instead to approve \$23.8 million in teacher raises and a plan to boost the minimum Idaho teacher salary by 3 percent.

### FROM THE IDAHO STATE JOURNAL (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

#### **District 25 trustees OK emergency levy**

\$300,000 levy will boost property taxes

BY CASEY SANTEE  
csantee@journalnet.com

POCATELLO — School District 25's Board of Trustees unanimously passed a \$300,000 emergency levy during a special meeting Tuesday night.

District officials said the money is needed to boost the budget following a \$250,000 drop in h

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y fund balance due to higher fuel costs, among other reasons. The district also suffered a \$48,000 loss from AMIS property taxes. In addition, the enrollment in District 25 schools increased by 255 students, which will require the hiring of additional staff.

“To try and take the \$300,000 out of the budget we passed would be devastating,” said Marianne Donnelly, District 25 Board chairwoman.

The levy will amount to a one-time addition of \$10.50 in taxes per \$100,000 of property valuation.

Donnelly said the board did not intend to spring the levy on the public, but the funds it will provide are necessary to maintain the current level of student instruction throughout the 2008-2009 school year.

Superintendent Mary Vagner said the community needs to know the district is balancing serving increased numbers of students against a loss of \$300,000 in projected revenue. She hopes the community knows the district understands the toughness of the current economic times.

The additional 255 students represents the highest yearly increase for District 25 in the past 16 years.

The meeting was at the Education Center at 3115 Pole Line Road.

### **Cell phones not on school supply list**

It seem students at St. Anthony will have to bring back good old-fashioned note-passing to tell friends that secret that can't wait until the end of class.

Gone, at least in that school district, are the days of secretly text messaging when the teacher isn't looking, or getting a little help on a test from a friend.

The district has place a strict ban on cell phones, meaning the devices cannot be used at school or on the buses.

Despite a collective groan from teens and even some parents, it's likely the students will survive and find other ways to communicate.

It's true that cellular phones are handy in an emergency, such as a school shooting or other tragedy, but there is no doubt they will be just as useful in the hands of administrators and teachers. And it's true that sometimes parents need to talk to their children during the day, but a quick call to the school and a student could be reached.

These aren't the reasons teens have cell phones at school anyway.

Not only does text messaging take note-passing to the next level, but the constantly evolving technology in cell phones also allows students to find new and creative ways to cheat on tests.

At the very least, the phones are a distraction to students and teachers alike.

St. Anthony school officials will have a tough time prying phones from the hands of teenagers, but the new rule is a good one.

There is barely enough time in the school day for students to get the education they need to succeed. The last thing they need is another distraction.

FROM THE IDAHO FALLS POST REGISTER (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

## **Idaho's public schools chief to request \$1.5 billion**

Associated Press

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